

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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Whole No. 514

Stratemeyer and Science Fiction

By John T. Dizer, Jr.



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 186

SERIES OF PRIZE NOVELS

Publisher: Dick & Fitzgerald, 18 Ann St., New York, N. Y. Issues: 30? (Have never seen this series advertised, but have examined 8 titles. The indication is that at least 30 titles were published.) Dates: 1860's. Schedule of Issue: Not known. Size: 9 5/8x6". Pages: 96 to 112. Price: 25c. Illustrations: Black ink drawing on orange cover paper. Many inside illustrations, in many instances full page woodcuts. Contents: Contemporary novels with some English and French reprints. The title of the eight examined are: *Caroline Tracy*; or, *The Milliner's Apprentice*. *Charley Hunter*; or, *The Fate of a Forger*. *Clarence Bolton*; or, *Life in New York*, by Joseph A. Scoville. *The Matricide's Daughter*; or, *Life in the Metropolis*, by Newton M. Curtis. *The Orphan Seamstress*; or, *Innocence and Guilt*. *St. Flore*; or, *The Midnight Conference*. *Star of the Fallen*; or, *The Fatal Disclosure*, by Newton M. Curtis. *The White Wolf*; or, *The Secret Brotherhood*, by Paul Feval.

Stratemeyer and Science Fiction

By John T. Dizer, Jr.

Part One

What are the blood lines of juvenile science fiction? Jules Verne to H. G. Wells to Asimov? Or Ellis to Senarens to Stratemeyer?

A major problem is a definition on which we can agree. Isaac Asimov says that "science fiction is that branch of literature which deals with fictitious society, differing from our own chiefly in the nature and extent of its technological development."¹

Gerald Heard, in the same article, says that "Science-fiction is the prophetic—a better term, the apocalyptic-literature of our particular and culminating epoch of crisis."² Neither of these definitions fits particularly well either Jules Verne or the juvenile science and adventure fiction of the last century.

Robert A. Heinlein in "Ray Guns and Rocket Ships" says "Science Fiction" is a portmanteau term, and many and varied are the things that have been stuffed into it. "... It would be more nearly correctly descriptive to call the whole field 'speculative fiction' and to limit the name 'science fiction' to a sub-class—in which case some of the other sub-classes would be: undisguised fantasy . . . pseudo-scientific fantasy . . . sociological speculation . . . (and) adventure stories with exotic and non-existent locale . . ." "Many other classes will occur to you, since the term 'speculative fiction' may be defined negatively as being fiction about things that have not happened."³

We have obviously a wide latitude in definition. For our purposes we are concerned with adventure stories containing a major strand of science and technology, usually placed in a relatively present day setting with normal though technically distinguished characters. The term "Science and Adventure Stories" might better satisfy the purists but "Science Fiction" seems understandable and reasonably appropriate.

The form of popular juvenile science fiction in this country, particularly in its early days, will surprise many. The fact is that its origin was in the "dime novels" and the "story papers" of the period. The earliest example is considered to be "The Steam Man of the Prairies" by Edward S. Ellis. This story pre-dated most of Verne's work, particularly the English translations of Verne.

Ellis's "The Steam Man of the Prairies" was first published as No. 45 of The American Novels, ca. August, 1868.⁴ It was reprinted 5 times through 1904 and was again reprinted in 1974 in Eight Dime Novels.⁵ Quoting Denis R. Rogers, "In my view, 'The Steam Man of the Prairies' was both before and of its time in that the demand in the late 1860's was still for the frontier yarn and, essentially, The American Novels No. 45 was an Indian story, with a science fiction element introduced to provide a new humorous slant."⁶

As reader's interests changed toward the technical or scientific, other

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NOTICE

The DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP will increase its pages to 24 each issue. This will enable us to publish the longer articles in one issue instead of issuing them in two parts or three parts as in the past. However for every bit of good news there has to be a bit of bad news. The bad news is that the ROUNDUP will be published every two months instead of every month. We will try to fill part of the void with special supplements such as Bibliographic Listings. At least two are being planned for 1976. In the fall of this year Randy Cox's Bibliography of the Nick Carter Weekly will be sent free to all subscribers. This will be a 72 page booklet crammed with illustrations (10) and information about Nick Carter never before published. We will also attempt to illustrate the articles with pertinent photos as well as continue the Dime Novel Sketches series. Subscription price will remain at \$5.00.

Our next issue will be in October, starting the six times per year frequency.

writers and publishers entered the field. Frank Tousey copied Ellis's creation with "Frank Reade and His Steam Man of the Plains" in 1876 and the science fiction battle between dime novel publishers was on. Luis P. Senarens created "Frank Reade Jr." for Tousey and, writing as "Noname," created a fantastic array of scientific marvels.⁷ Not only did Verne write a congratulatory letter to Senarens but he paid him the ultimate compliment of "borrowing" his material.⁸ Street and Smith competed with such stories as "Tom Edison Jr's Electric Sea Spider" in the Nugget Library of 1892 and "Emerson Bell's serial "The Electric Air and Water Wizard" in "Good News," 1893-94. The youth of America devoured the stories of science and adventure. This was their introduction to science fiction.

The American writers were particularly influenced by the American growth in science and technology and by American scientific heroes. Street and Smith helped themselves to Edison's name. Even Edward Stratmeyer used the pen-name "Theodore Edison" for his serial, "The Wizard of the Deep," published in "Young Sports of America" in 1895. The youthful readership may have later read Jules Verne and H. G. Wells but their initial exposure was mainly to native American science fiction.

For librarians and educators the American writers do not exist. *Children's Literature in the Elementary School* has this statement: "The beginning of science fiction and adventure can surely be found in Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, (1870) and *Around the World in Eighty Days*, (1872). Modern writers may be surprised to note the early dates of these books."⁹ How Edward Ellis and Lou Senarens would have hooted, not to mention the generation brought up on "Jack Wright" and "Frank Reade Jr."

Cornelia Meigs in *A Critical History of Children's Literature*, under a section entitled "Jules Verne Conducts Excursions to a Hidden World" says, "To the many nineteenth century milestones along the road of children's literature must be added one more, the rise of the scientific adventure story. Jules Verne (1825-1905), its progenitor, was a Frenchman . . ."¹⁰

To these statements one can only say, "hogwash." If these writers had said instead, "among the writers of whom we approve, Jules Verne was an early and influential figure in science fiction," no one could have objected. The plain facts are, and they have been plentifully documented by numerous writers including Sam Moskowitz, Denis Rogers, Quentin Reynolds and Charles Bragin, that Verne did not originate science fiction or the scientific adventure.

In addition he was certainly not as popular among the American boys of the period as Ellis or "Noname." The mainstream of the popular boys scientific adventure in this country has been much more influenced by Ellis, Senarens and later, Stratemeyer, than by Verne.

Even Bailey's classic *Pilgrims Through Space and Time* contains misleading statements about the dime novel-story paper era. He states: "Before 1900 scientific fiction, made popular by the romances of Jules Verne, branched out into juvenile literature." "A typical series is the 'Frank Reade' stories. Noname (pseud. for Lu Senarens) published weekly adventures of a boy-hero in his 'teens, . . .'" "Details of the machine are always vague, but it is usually something made familiar by Verne or other writers of scientific fiction."¹¹ Not only is the dating inaccurate but the inference that the dime novel authors were sterile hacks who lifted their material from better writers is completely erroneous. There was certainly some plagiarism—on both sides as Moscowitz has pointed out—but the one criticism which is seldom seriously made of dime novel writers is a lack of imagination.

It is possibly reasonable to ask why Verne gets such a good press by the writers of histories of Children's Literature while writers like Ellis, Senarens, Patten, Stratemeyer and Garis do not receive passing mention for their science fiction writings. The unfortunate answer is that these writers of "history" do not generally acknowledge the existence of the 'sub-culture' of popular childrens literature, including the dime novel, story paper and hard-cover series books. Not only does this attitude give the student who may soon be teaching or working in the library field an unbalanced presentation, it gives an inaccurate one. As important as Verne was, he was only one of a host of writers in the field.

Continuing our examination of the blood lines of juvenile science fiction let us briefly note two modern series. "Lucky Starr" (*Lucky Starr and the Oceans of Venus, Lucky Starr and the Moons of Jupiter*, etc.) is the hero of a series by "Paul French." Paul French is better known as Isaac Asimov. The books are well-written and entertaining. They contain a cast of characters from various planets and take place at least a thousand years in the future. The adventures are, to date, somewhat implausible. This series might be considered the "classic" evolution of the Jules Verne-Wells prototype.

The second example is "Tom Swift, Jr." As we will note in some detail in another chapter, Tom is a modern earthling, quite scientifically advanced for an 18 year old. His adventures and inventions are in the realm of the near-future. These books are also well-written and entertaining and well-researched. They can be classified as the offspring of Tom Swift (literally) and the story papers of the 1890's (figuratively). Of the two series "Tom" has been unquestionably the most widely read and "influential" in that respect. And Tom is only the latest "science fiction" series created by the Stratemeyer Syndicate.

Edward Stratemeyer's importance and influence in the juvenile field have been so thoroughly discussed in numerous articles that it is redundant to mention them. His interest in science and invention and his own writings in the field are less well known. The interest was an early one. His second published serial was "Jack, the Inventor; or, The Trials and Triumphs of a Young Machinist." It appeared in Edward Ellis's "The Holiday" from April 25, 1891 to June 3, 1891.¹² The magazine expired and it is uncertain whether the entire serial was published. It was published in its entirety, however, in Street and Smith's *Good News*, Vol. 4, Nos. 90-100, January 23, 1892-April 2, 1892. It made a third appearance in Stratemeyer's own *Bright Days* as "A Young Inventor's Pluck; or, The Wellington Legacy," Nos. 303-1, February

20, 1897-February 27, 1897 and again was unfinished as the magazine folded.

The same story, slightly revised, was then printed in hard-cover by Saalfeld in 1901 as "A Young Inventor's Pluck! or, The Mystery of the Willington Legacy" and went through various printings by Saalfeld and others. The author was "Arthur M. Winfield" in the book form but Stratmeyer in the earlier serials.

There is more of adventure than science in this story. Jack is "a wide-awake American lad of a mechanical turn of mind." He "is an inventor and has almost ready the model of a useful and valuable invention. . ." The invention was a planing machine attachment and was sold for \$4,000, a good sum in 1891. At the end of the story "Jack is now superintendent at the tool works, and besides his salary, draws a handsome royalty from his father's and his own inventions." The pragmatic emphasis is somewhat reminiscent of "Tom Swift and His Motor-Cycle" where Tom had to have his father show him how to gear up his motor-cycle properly.

"Joe the Surveyor; or, The Value of a Lost Claim," is another engineering-oriented serial published in *Good News* from May 1, 1894 to July 21, 1894. Here, again, the science plays a subordinate part to the adventure. It is a good story, however, was printed in hard-cover in 1903 by Lee & Shepard and later became volume No. 6 of Stratmeyer's *Popular Series*.

This is not to infer that Stratmeyer was either unaware of or uninvolved in more exotic science fiction. As editor of *Good News* in the early 1890's, as assistant editor and later editor of *Young Sports of America* and as editor-publisher of *Bright Days* he was competing with the leaders in the field.

Good News published "The Electric Air and Water Wizard" from Nov. 18, 1893 to Feb. 3, 1894 and continued with "In the Heart of the Earth; or, The Secrets of an Extinct Volcano," Oct. 20, 1894 to Jan. 12, 1895, both by "Emerson Bell."

Emerson Bell is believed to be Gilbert Patten although Reynolds claims Patten did not join Street and Smith until 1894.^{13,14} The "Lad Electric" stories by Bell were also published in *Good News*, although by then Stratmeyer had joined Frank J. Earll of *Young Sports of America*.

Although *Young Sports of America* (later *Young People of America*) had a strong sports emphasis, Stratmeyer wrote two science and adventure stories for this periodical. The first was the serial, "Nat Donald, King of the Air; or, The Marvelous Adventures of a Young Balloonist," by "Roy Rockwood." (7/20-95-8/24/95) "Roy Rockwood" was a pen name for Stratmeyer at this time, though later used as a "house name" for Syndicate series.

The following month "The Wizard of the Deep; or, Over and Under the Ocean in Search of the \$1,000,000 Pearl," by "Theodore Edison" appeared. It ran from 8/10/95 to 9/14/95. This serial was published by Mershon in 1900 as "The Wizard of the Sea; or, A Trip Under the Ocean" with "Roy Rockwood" as the author.

As publisher of *Bright Days* Stratmeyer continued to give his readership a wide choice of topics. In the science line was "Bound to Be an Electrician; or, A Clear Head and Stout Heart," April 1896 to August 1896 by "Arthur M. Winfield." Another example is "The Land of Fire" with its secret underground mines complete with underground village lighted by arc lights. This serial, first published Sept. 26, 1896 to Nov. 14, 1896, was printed in hard-cover by Mershon in 1900. The author, "Louis Charles" was Louis Charles Stratmeyer together with Edward Stratmeyer.¹⁵

In the same year appeared "Balloon Boys; or, Adventures among the Clouds," by "Capt. Ralph Bonehill" and "The Young Civil Engineer" as science fiction but it shows Stratmeyer's interest in the technical. This civil engin-

earing interest also appeared in another serial called "Building The Line," a railroad story, which appeared in The Popular Magazine of July and August, 1904.

Three unusual Stratemeyer serials appeared in Norman Munroe's *Golden Hours*." The first was "Holland, the Destroyer; or, America Against the World," by "Hal Harkaway." It ran from Nov. 24, 1900 to Jan. 12, 1901. It was first printed in hard-cover as "The Young Naval Captain; or, The War of All Nations" by Thompson and Thomas in 1902. The author was given as "Capt. Ralph Bonehill." It was later reprinted by Donohue as "Oscar the Naval Cadet."

The second to appear was "Lost in the Land of Ice; or Bob Baxter at the South Pole," by "Roy Rockwood." It ran from Dec. 1, 1900 to Jan. 26, 1901. Wessels published this serial in hard-cover in 1902 with Capt. Ralph Bonehill as the author.

The third was *Rival Ocean Divers; or, A Boy's Daring Search for Sunken Treasure*," by Roy Rockwood, which appeared Jan. 5, 1901 to Feb. 23, 1901. Although it was not published in hard-cover until Stitt brought it out in a revised form in 1905 it had a long life and appeared in The Deep Sea Series, The Dave Fearless Series and The Sea Treasure Series.

Two of Stratemeyer's books, *First at the North Pole* (1909) and *Over the Ocean to Paris* (1927) would have qualified as science fiction if they had been written a few years earlier. The first was written at the time of the Dr. Cook-Pearry controversy and the second after Lindbergh's flight so that both are current science and adventure.

If we insist on a minimum of science, *Lost in the Land of Ice* would fail to qualify. Even though the boys reached the south pole in 1900 they did it by conventional means. They went by boat and outside of a few difficulties with icebergs, polar bears (at the south pole!) and giant condors which carried off one of the party they had a routine expedition. They used no special scientific devices or aids.

The three early books written entirely by Edward Stratemeyer which come closest to juvenile science-fiction are *The Rival Ocean Divers*, *The Wizard of the Sea* and *The Young Naval Captain*. The *Rival Ocean Divers* concerns a voyage to the Pacific in search of a treasure sunk in the ship "Happy Hour." The expedition uses a "Costell diving bell."

"You mean one of those glass cages which they can lower to the bottom of the ocean and then walk around on big steel legs, like an artificial crab?"

The "Happy Hour" is 12,500 feet down in the middle of the ocean. In spite of this the salvage party found it with relative ease as did their enemies. The divers were lowered to the bottom in the diving bell. They were able to leave the bell in "those new steel-ribbed diving suits we had made in Washington especially for this trip. . ." The treasure had disappeared from the ship.

Since this is also a scientific expedition the divers captured a "lampyrine lucifer," or electric-light fish and a "ray of fire" fish. Another "ray of fire" fish almost finished off Amos Fearless, the chief diver, by winding itself around his neck and trying to strangle him. Dave Fearless, his son, was able to cut him loose. All this happened at only half a mile down.

At a mile down Dave captured "two spiral whipsnaps, to use the vulgar name, and half a dozen fish which are new to science." When the divers descended to the full two mile depth they found a forest of submarine trees but were able to move the diving bell from one tree-top to another by means of the crab-like claws attached to the bottom.

"At last the diving bell gained the edge of the forest and came to a rest

upon one of the banks of moss of many colors." "Should they leave the diving bell upon an exploring tour?"

They do but shortly came across "a monster as startling as it was horrible." "It had a long, round body, fat and blubbery, with two legs in the center, two arms near the neck, and at the end the tail of a fish. The head was shaped like a huge pear, with eyes blinking savagely from either side of a nose which was as long and pointed as a cow's horn. The mouth of the demon was wide open, showing a double row of sharp, bluish teeth and a tongue covered with yellow slime. All told, the creature was at least tenfeet long, and when it stood up it towered well over the heads of the two divers."

They shot the first demon only to find the area was infested by the creatures.

The divers escaped to the diving bell in the nick of time and returned to the surface. The demons are presumed to belong to the lost order of "chilusia damondaribytis" and supposed to have lived at one time upon the lost continent of Atlantis.

In a later descent the divers found a "curiously shaped mound of shells, covered with moss.

"Hullo, what's this?" said Dave. 'Hang me if it doesn't look like the home of some submarine animal. Perhaps it's a meeting house for those demons'."

They examined the mound which "proved to be hollow, with the walls covered with brilliant seashells of all colors." In the center was a smaller mound which proved to contain the missing treasure. "The gold was mixed with bits of other bright metal and glass, for whoever had stored it there (the demons?) had known no difference in value and had simply made a collection of stuff bright to the eye."

The divers removed the treasure to the diving bell and after a final brush with the demons were hoisted aboard ship. They brought a reluctant demon with them in one of the "crab-like claws of the bell."

"And the wonderful monster," put in Doctor Barrell. 'What an odd creature! It will make a grand exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution.'

One would think that this would happily conclude the adventures of the Fearless but it was not to be. It took until 1908 and two more books, *The Cruise of the Treasure Ship* and *Adrift on the Pacific* before Amos and Dave Fearless were able to get the treasure to the United States and make a proper financial disposition of it. The latter two books have no aspects of science fiction. They were written in the early days of the Stratemeyer Syndicate and, while issued under the name "Roy Rockwood," do not appear to have Stratemeyer's writing characteristics.

The Wizard of the Sea is a strange book. It is embarrassingly reminiscent of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. In spite of some slight internal evidence, the fact that it appeared in *Young Sports of America* while Stratemeyer was editor and the fact that it was printed in hard-cover under the "Roy Rockwood" name it is hard to authenticate as his writing. Even the original serial author, "Theodore Edison," is not consistent with Stratemeyer tradition. As his daughter has pointed out in connection with "D. T. Henty," another pen name sometimes associated with Stratemeyer, Stratemeyer wasn't the type of person to capitalize on another's name, and there was no need to since his professional reputation was already established.¹⁶ A possible answer is that as editor of *Young Sports of America* he was doing so much writing for it that he had to use a variety of pen names and "Edison" has a nice ring to it. This does not explain the similarity to Verne Stratemeyer's ability to create plots, characters and situations, which is so evident

in most of his writings, may have been affected by the pressures of his stationery store in Newark which he was still operating at the time, together with his editing and writing. At any rate, if Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea is science fiction, so is *The Wizard of the Sea*!

For most of the first six chapters the story is concerned with the exploits of Mont Folsom at "Nautical Hall," a boarding school on the seacoast. Suddenly the action changes. Mont, his chum Carl Barnaby and his "devoted follower" John Stumpton or "Stump" are sailing in the ocean when they are run down and then rescued by the ship "Golden Cross." Shortly after this the lookout on the "Golden Cross" sights a strange sail.

"It was soon discovered that the sail was nothing more or less than a man clinging to a chicken coop, who had taken off his shirt and hoisted it on high to attract attention."

The man is Homer Woddle, Secretary for the Exploration of the Unknown Parts of the World. His ship had been sunk by "a wonderful sea monster" which was "black and long, like a gigantic eel, and threw out phosphorescent light." When the monster shortly appeared on the scene Homer Woddle and the three boys attacked it. The monster upset their small boat and rammed the "Golden Cross." The attackers found themselves on top of the submarine, for such the monster was, and were eventually all dragged down into the "floating iron shell."

The captain's name was Vindex and he is "the Wizard of the Sea." The submarine "Searcher" had been built on a desert island in the Pacific by the twelve negroes who form the crew. Captain Vindex, like Captain Nemo, has renounced the world. Like Captain Nemo he has equipped his salon with valuable paintings, a frescoed ceiling and a "Turkey carpet." He has an organ as well although his taste in music seems a bit different. "Captain Vindex . . . played Sousa's 'Liberty Bell March' with great skill." On other occasions he also played "an exquisite air of Beethoven," and "a Scotch air which had an indescribable charm about it."

The submarine is powered by electricity. "My motive power is electricity, and I can attain a speed of thirty miles an hour." "The men of the world have not yet discovered half the value of electricity." "Engineering science is yet in its infancy. The world has great discoveries to make. You are at present only on the threshold of the great unknown'."

Captain Vindex takes them hunting in a submarine forest. They are equipped with special self-contained diving gear and have air guns and electric bullets. They have electric lamps as well "which made their path clear and distinct. . . ." They make a landing on a South Sea Island and are attacked by Papouans. Captain Vindex, like Captain Nemo, electrified the submarine and the natives a 'stunning' time, as Mont put it. They visited the pearl fisheries of Ceylon and inspected a pearl worth \$100,000. The smaller pearls which they picked up later made the party "all rich men" after their escape.

For some odd reason there was no canal yet built through the Isthmus of Suez (in 1895) so the submarine used an underground tunnel between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, as had the Nautilus.

Captain Vindex waxed prophetic during the trip. "Shortly, my dear sir," said the captain, "your children—that is to say, the next generation—will travel through the air in flying machines; your railway engines will own electricity as their motive power. There is no end to scientific discovery; the world is in its infancy. We are just emerging from barbarism'."

When the "Searcher" neared the island of Cyprus the captives escaped from the submarine and gained the shore. In an attempt to re-capture them Captain Vindex rammed the "Searcher" into the rocks, the submarine was

blown to atoms and all on board were killed. Captain Vindex never did find his million dollar pearl.

The third of Stratemeyer's early science fiction is in a different vein altogether. "The Young Naval Captain; or, The War of All Nations" (written in 1900) takes place in 1936. "Captain Ralph Bonchill" in the introduction to the book says, "... I wished to draw the attention of my young readers to the fact that naval science, as well as science in all other branches, is making wonderful strides, and that for the future hardly anything seems impossible. In years gone by electric lights, the telephone and telegraph, not to mention wireless telegraphy, navigable balloons, and even our railroad trains would have been laughed at as impossibilities. Yet to-day we have all these things, and many others equally wonderful, and each day we look forward to something even more startling."

In 1936 the United States "now embraces all of North America, from the Isthmus of Panama to Hudson Bay, and takes in all of the West Indies, Hawaii, the Philippines, and half a dozen other islands of the sea, as well as a corner of China and another corner of Japan."

The country has over 100 million inhabitants and nearly all are well to do. New York City has been "built up solid as far as Yonkers." There are 4 bridges between New York and Brooklyn and two bridges from Manhattan to New Jersey. The biggest building in the city is the "Empire" which is fifty-six stories tall although plans are in progress to build a building one hundred stories high and three blocks long. Balloons with electric lights are "anchored a mile in the air."

There has been a "Yellow War of 1925" in which "England, France, Germany, Russia and Japan wanted to carve up poor China" and Uncle Sam wouldn't allow it. We had helped the Boers to freedom in South Africa and "turned the Turkish kingdom inside out in 1928" over an old quarrel about money.

Although the United States had "tried to settle the many existing troubles without an appeal to arms" they had failed. It seemed necessary to declare war against the world. The decision was not a particularly wise one. The armed forces numbered over a million men (no air force, however) and the soldiers were armed with the Miles-Gilford electric repeating rifles. The sharpshooters used telescopes with their rifles and "could pick off an enemy at a mile distance with ease."

The combined navies of the world came to our eastern sea coast and fought a great battle off Sandy Hook. The United States navy was decisively beaten, mainly because of a German submarine which wrecked three American warships.

In this hour of need Oscar came to the rescue. Oscar Pelham, hero of the book, "had a strong taste for electricity and mechanics generally." After spending three years at Edison's Electrical University at Llewellyn Park he entered the services of the Standard Ship Yard.

At 19 he perfected the plans for a radically new submarine. The vessel was to be powered by "two small but exceedingly powerful screws, operated by an electric engine." She was to carry "both natural and manufactured air" and expected to reach a speed of 23 knots, absolutely without noise. Since he was financially independent he built a model of the craft at his own expense and sailed it successfully on Long Island Sound.

After the disastrous battle Oscar took his model to Washington and demonstrated it before the Secretary of the Navy and Jefferson McKinley Adams, President of the United States. The Navy Department immediately appropriated half a million dollars to build the "Holland XI" but gave Oscar only a

month to do it in. This was plenty, however, and in 25 days he launched the ship and put it into service. Oscar was placed in command with a Navy rank of captain and his chum, Andy Greggs was made first lieutenant.

The Americans had lost four more warships by this time and were preparing for a battle off Cuba. Oscar's first war action was with the "Tien-Tsin," a "monster Chinese armored cruiser." His usual technique was to submerge, fasten a torpedo or mine with a timing mechanism to the bottom of his victim, and leave hurriedly. He blew the Chinese cruiser into millions of fragments in this engagement.

He next tackled a French cruiser off the coast of Cuba but three Yankee warships sank her first, unfortunately right on top of the Holland. When an ammunition magazine exploded on the "Republique" it freed the Holland although Oscar, who was outside checking the damage, had to walk underwater to Cuba where he was captured by the Japanese.

After Oscar was rescued by his crew the Holland attacked the Japanese troops who were planning to invade Florida. They killed enough to at least slow up the invasion.

Their next action was on the Canadian coast where an enemy fleet of 34 warships and 66 transports was waiting to attack. Oscar sank the British cruiser "Terrible," the German gunboat "Wilhelm II" and the French ship-of-the-line "Philippe." The fleet moved back out to sea. For some reason the German submarine never again appears in this war.

About this time the enemy abducted Martha Adams, the President's daughter, and she was reported to be a prisoner on a foreign warship. Oscar was much interested in Martha and worried about her the rest of the book.

The next big battle started without Oscar since one of the Holland's screws had been damaged. The battle again went against the United States and by the end of the day the outlook was grim. Oscar arrived on the scene just in time to turn defeat into victory. He sank a British cruiser and a French ship which carried "a newly-invented battery of dynamite guns." He shot a single torpedo which tore great holes in two German vessels and then fired two new "hightite" bombs at the enemy which did "fearful execution." He followed up by sinking a Turkish man-o-war and an Italian corvette and bombed an enemy transport. The battle ended in a triumph for the Americans and Oscar Pelham was the man of the hour.

After re-fitting the Holland at the Charlestown Navy Yard Oscar took her through the new Central American Canal to tackle a fleet of fifty Chinese, Japanese and Russian warships which was expected to attack San Francisco. He foiled a plot to blow up the canal locks and reached San Francisco to find the enemy had attacked the Hawaiian Islands. It took the Holland ten days to reach Honolulu. When they arrived they found the city had surrendered.

Oscar solved this problem by torpedoing the enemy fleet, and things were looking up when the Holland was cast ashore by a tidal wave and attacked by three warships. Another tidal wave rolled her back to sea and wrecked the enemy ships. Following this Oscar left Hawaii, searching for the rest of the foreign fleet. His searching was interrupted by a sportive whale who stuck his head through the trap door opening of the submarine and had to be blown out with a small shell.

After blowing up another Japanese warship Oscar continued his search for the enemy and found two Chinese cruisers, two Japanese cruisers and two English men-of-war. He sneaked on board a British ship to get details of the enemy's plans, was discovered, but talked his way out by pretending to be a British spy. He returned to the Holland with "Hang Chang," captain of one of the Chinese warships, as a captive. Hang Chang had the details

of the abduction of Martha Adams and, encouraged by Oscar's threats of torture told all. Martha is on the "Green Dragon," a Chinese ship. Hang later went insane, attacked Oscar and had to be killed.

The Holland interrupted the shelling of San Francisco but one of the anchors of the "Tokio" "slipped overboard and the anchor chain became entangled in the screw of the subarmine craft." The Tokio towed the unwilling Holland to Fisherman's Bay before Oscar was able to remove the cable, sink the Tokio and save an American transport.

Adventures followed thick and fast as the submarine was imprisoned in a cave under the ocean and Oscar and Andy were attacked by a thirty foot long sea serpent. After their escape they encountered an electrical storm which burned out the ship's switchboard and almost sank them. It took two days to repair all the damage.

They met the enemy fleet at Cape Nome, only to find the warships had protected themselves by placing wires on the under side of the keels, "stretching out in all directions, like the spokes of some gigantic bicycle wheel." "These wires were connected with an alarm bell . . ." Oscar solved this by floating a torpedo under the "Ivan II" and sinking her. The rest of the fleet lifted the bombardment of Cape Nome and fled to sea.

Oscar now had time to look for Martha Adams so the Holland returned to the Caribbean where the "Green Dragon" had been sighted. Through negligence the Holland was captured by Spanish and Italian naval men but recaptured by Oscar and Andy in a short time with the help of the electric rifles. One of their captives is the traitor "Gabretti" for whom a fifty thousand dollar reward has been offered but Oscar is generous. "'A fair share of it shall go to my men,' answered Oscar."

Meanwhile a United States army had invaded England, another army was on the way to Japan and a third bound for China. The enemy had won but 4 of 16 naval battles and 3 of 22 land battles. The foreign nations were growing tired of the war.

After surviving an underwater earthquake the Holland rescued a Frenchman who directed them to the "Green Dragon." Just as they arrived Martha leaped overboard to avoid the attentions of a Chinese admiral. Oscar shot the admiral and rescued Martha in spite of being wounded himself. He then blew up the Green Dragon and sailed the Holland back to Chesapeake Bay to find the war was over.

When the Holland showed up "it found a regular flotilla of warships there, ready to do her honor." The President and his wife came in person to meet Oscar and Martha. "It was a fitting end to a most glorious campaign on land and sea."

The government profited from experience and built twelve new submarine boats of the Holland pattern with Rear Admiral Oscar Pelham as commander of all the United States submarine craft afloat. "He was known far and wide as a brilliant inventor and daring navy official. And his pretty wife, Martha, was equally known for her great beauty and her sweetness of heart."

Stratemeyer's personal interest in the technical continued to be reflected in many of the Syndicate series. After he formed his Literary Syndicate about 1906 he wrote fewer books himself, but instead plotted, outlined and edited the books published by the Syndicate. Such series as *The Motor Boys*, *Dave Dashaway* and *The Speedwell Boys* all reflected Stratemeyer's interest—and that of American youth—in the technical developments of the day. The emphasis was on more-or-less true life adventures with modern or slightly advanced technology thrown in for good measure. Even Tom Swift started

in this vilen but Tom rapidly became a high calibre inventor with a long list of futuristic inventions to his credit.

A particularly interesting Stratemeyer series with a strong "space travel" theme is the Great Marvel Series by Roy Rockwood. It qualifies as juvenile science-fiction by almost any definition. This series started in 1906 about the time Stratemeyer organized the Syndicate. Although he developed the plots, characters and general outline of most of the books, the writing was done by contract authors. Roger Garis claims his father, Howard Garis wrote the series.¹⁷ Sam Moskowitz states that the series was "quite obviously derived from Luis Senarens' Frank Reade, Jr., series."¹⁸

The cast of the series featured Professor Henderson the inventor, two orphans Mark Sampson and Jack Darraw who live with Professor Henderson, and Washington White, the negro assistant. Mark and Jack were 15 and 16 years old when the series started but they grew older slowly through the years. One might have thought their adventures would have had a rapid aging effect but apparently not. Washington White was "a big colored man, seemingly as strong as an ox," and also engineer on the North Pole expedition. As Professor Henderson said, "Washington and I understand every piece of machinery. If we need any help we will call on you." Washington was called "a genius in his way, though somewhat inclined to use big words, of the meaning of which he knew little and cared less." Andy Sudds, an old hunter, and Bill Jones and Tom Smith, two young farmers, made up the rest of the crew in the **early books**.

The first book, **Through The Air to the North Pole**, was a relatively conservative trip in an airship. "Up near the roof of the place, which was quite high, there swayed an immense bag of oiled silk. It was shaped like a cigar, big in the middle and tapering at both ends. The bag was enclosed in a net of ropes which extended down to the lower part of the airship.

This lower part, as the boys could see, was just like a steam launch in shape, only much lighter in weight. It had a sharp bow, and a blunt stern. From the stern there extended a large propeller, the blades being made from sheets of aluminum.

This was the "Monarch" in which its inventor Professor Henderson and his friends successfully travelled to the North Pole and back. The somewhat primitive Monarch was followed in **Under the Ocean to the South Pole** by the "Porpoise," a unique submarine propelled by a "water cable."

"Through the entire length of the ship ran a round hole or shaft, one foot in diameter. Within this was an endless screw worked by powerful engines." The engine was a turbine, and steam was generated from heat furnished by the burning of a powerful gas, manufactured from sea water and chemicals." The combination worked beautifully and the group travelled successfully to the South Pole. They were unable to stop because the ocean was practically boiling hot right at the Pole.

In addition, they were caught in the grass of the Sargasso Sea, had to fight off monstrous suckers which grasped the boat in their powerful arms, were imprisoned between big fields, visited a graveyard of sunken ships and saw many strange monsters. They also found a great whirlpool which seemed to lead far into the earth and offered opportunities for further adventures.

Two years later the professor built a craft which could both sail on top of the water and navigate the air. He named it the "Flying Mermaid." In this craft which "seemed like two immense cigars, one above the other," the explorers made a voyage to the interior of the earth, entering by means of the great whirlpool.

Their adventures were described in **Five Thousand Miles Underground**

The ship was moved by the "power of compressed air. From either end of the lower hull there projected a short pipe working in a ball and socket joint, so it could be turned in any direction." The ship even contained "a small automatic piano worked by the electric current, on which popular airs could be played." The gas used had five times the lifting power of hydrogen and the gravity neutralizer also helped.

In a strange country, five hundred miles underground, they found giant man-eating pitcher plants. Jack Darrow inadvertently rolled down a hill and bounced into the opening of a monster pitcher plant which attempted to devour him. Fortunately the others cut through the side of the flower cup and rescued Jack in the nick of time. This incident is so similar to Howard Garis's spoof, "Professor Jonkin's Cannibal Plant," which appeared in the August, 1905 *Argosy*, that it seems most probable that Garis was the writer of at least this book.

The travelers met fish that walk and a snake-tree which "is a plant, half animal, half-vegetable. It has long branches, not unlike a snake in shape. They can move about and grab things." The snake-tree captured Jack but again his friends rescued him. They met a creature with "the body of a bear, but the feet and legs . . . of an alligator, while the tail trailed out behind like a snake, and the head had a long snout, not unlike the trunk of an elephant." They also came across a tribe of giants, ten to fifteen feet tall who captured the Flying Mermaid. The explorers were rescued by King Hankos who also gave them directions to the temple of treasure where they stocked up on gold and diamonds. They returned to the surface of the earth in an emergency cylinder lifeboat although they had to leave the Flying Mermaid and the gold behind.

This book was possibly intended to end the series since it states, "As the professor was getting quite old, and incapable of making any more wonderful inventions, he closed up his workshop and settled down to a quiet life." Jack and Mark, the youthful heroes, planned, however, to get a good education and after that to invent something better and take another trip. The door was left open for further adventures.

The next book in the series, *Through Space to Mars*, appeared in 1910, the same year as *Tom Swift*. It was followed by *Lost on the Moon* in 1911 and *On a Torn-Away World* in 1913. There was a twelve year gap before *The City Beyond the Clouds* appeared in 1925 and another four years before *By Air Express to Venus* was published in 1929. The last of the series, *By Space Ship to Saturn*, did not appear until 1935, five years after Stratemeyer's death. This was the same year that *Tom Swift and His Planet Stone*, last of the card-cover Tom Swifts, was published.

In *Through Space to Mars*, Jack and Mark are students at the Universal Electrical and Chemical College and doing well although Jack often "produced small explosions in the laboratory of the college." They are called home by Professor Henderson to meet another inventor who has a "wonderful, secret power—Etherium," with which he expects to travel to Mars.

The projectile which is to take them to Mars is soon built and equipped with Etherium power as well as electric cannons. The "Annihilator" travels at the rate of one hundred miles a second and reaches Mars in twelve days including delays caused by a crazy stowaway machinist and a little difficulty caused by running into Donati's comet.

Mars is inhabited by a strange race of beings. "They make a special study of the sciences, and geometry and mathematics probably are their favorites." The travelers are able to communicate with the Martians through mathematics. Fifty years later Tom Swift Jr. used the same language in his

dealings with creatures from another world. Mars is a wonderful place, full of strange and exciting novelties including "thought force" and a "mysterious red substance" which is a source of heat, light and power. It is called "Cardite," and the members of the expedition spend most of their time trying to steal a supply of it.

Mars is superior to our earth in many ways. "One was the simplicity of life." "In science they were far ahead of scientists of the earth . . ." "That is all they do—study. That's what makes their ears, eyes, nose and mouth so big. They use them to listen to scientific sounds, to look at scientific objects, smell scientific odors, and talk of scientific things."

The Martians catch the group stealing "Cardite" and object violently, but are neutralized by the electric cannons of the "Annihilator." It seems wisest for the Annihilator to leave Mars at this point and return to earth. The "Cardite" proved to be enormously valuable and a new motor was built to run with it. The boys returned to college.

With the Cardite motor in the Annihilator it was a simple matter to journey to the moon in their next adventure. The new motor set a record of one hundred and fifty-three miles a second, a goodly speed for 1911. A Martian newspaper had given an account of diamonds on the moon and it seemed logical for our scientists to get a piece of the action.

It was necessary to wear fur-lined garments and carry "torches of life," small iron boxes of chemicals which provided an atmosphere. Other than that the group had made no special preparations. "It was like being in the wildest part of the Canadian Rocky Mountains of our earth. . ."

Through sheer stupidity Jack, Mark and Andy Sudds became lost on the moon and stumbled across a petrified city. There were houses, animals and humans, all turned to stone by some calamity. After being lost for a week they discovered a field of diamonds. The Annihilator providently appeared also, the party took all the diamonds they wished and left for home. They took with them a petrified man and "a history of it, in two large volumes, can be seen in the museum where the body is exhibited.

The transportation becomes much more prosaic in *On a Torn Away World*. Mark and Jack have invented an improved aeroplane, the "Snowbird," which is capable of fifty miles an hour or more. They fly to Alaska and are involved in a tremendous earthquake and volcanic disturbance. Parts of Alaska is blown into space and becomes a satellite for a few weeks. This disturbs our heroes as the force of gravity is considerably less, their plane has been wrecked and they are concerned about returning to earth. The satellite returns to earth of its own accord and lands in the North Pacific. No one is hurt and the group returns to civilization on board a whaler which also survived the trip.

When the series was resumed in 1925 with *The City Beyond the Clouds* Jack and Mark had just built an advanced telescope from designs by Professor Henderson. In the intervening years they had gone to war, "both winning medals for their heroism in action." "They had been sent to the Universal Electrical and Chemical College, there their rapid progress amazed their teachers." Washington White had now degenerated to an ignorant servant although a "prime favorite" of the boys. Even the boys had changed. Mark now was "slightly smaller, slender, and inclined to be serious," whereas previously there had been "a certain stoutness of which Mark never could seem to get rid." The war may have thinned him down.

The first time they use the telescope they see a falling aviator, 50 miles in the air. They rescue him and find he is a famous scientist, Gustavus Hertz, who disappeared some time ago. He has escaped from a strange,

small world located in the sky not far beyond our earth. It is inhabited by four foot high, hideous, red dwarfs. He had taken his son and daughter exploring in an advanced plane of his design and reached this new world. In escaping he inadvertently left his children behind.

Naturally something had to be done about this. The boys recruit a number of old service buddies and Hertz builds a new machine, vastly superior to the airships of the day. By the use of a secret compound and special wing design it was possible to attain speeds of several thousand miles an hour. At the same time the use of the helicopter principle allowed the plane to rise and descend vertically.

The group needed oxygen masks but the plane had no special problems in the lack of atmosphere and in about two days they reached the City Beyond the Clouds. Outside of an attack by giant grasshoppers, poison water and flowers they had no real problems until they met a kayo. "It had the body of a grizzly bear and the head of a bison, but was three times as large as any grizzly . . . or any buffalo . . ." It was definitely unfriendly and was killed with difficulty.

Arriving at the prison of the red dwarves they captured a dwarf and gained news about Berta and Max, Professor Hertz's children. Events moved swiftly and the party rescued Greta from the chief's palace and took off. They were shortly captured by the dwarfs, who were nobody's fools, and imprisoned. Max was thrown into the same prison which made it easier when they escaped. After they killed the king of the dwarves and as many others as possible they struggled to the airship and "soared aloft." As they headed for the earth there was a tremendous explosion which marked the end of the planet. The ship reached earth with no difficulties and all was well. Washington gave them a supper that was "a triumph of the gustatory art and one long to be remembered."

In *By Air Express to Venus* mysterious comets (UFO's) visit the earth and cause radios to explode. A woman in blue, gifted with mental telepathy and obviously "a being from another world" appears to ask for help. The mysterious comets are Venusian space ships. The first came to earth on a scientific voyage and was wrecked and the second was a rescue ship which was also wrecked. One of the Venusians is injured and all are about to run out of food. They appeal to our earth scientists and inventors to build one usable space ship from the ruins of the two. Professor Henderson and associates do so and all leave hurriedly for Venus.

The space ship is run by an engine of gold and "operates on the rocket principle." They travelled at a rate exceeding 345,000 miles per hour. Outside of "ether blasts," a storm of "yellow snow," a wandering comet and a giant meteor they had few problems reaching Venus. They even tuned in to the "music of the spheres" on their radio.

When they reached Venus the negative gravity machines were thrown into gear and they landed safely. Venus was inhabited by two distinct races of people that never mingled. The expedition landed on Kar where the life-giving blue water was found. The technology was most advanced and included "thought wagons" which traveled on both land and water and "magnetic wands" which served as effective weapons. Some of the natives were "zotas" with the ability to "negative the force of gravitation." "They could rise in the air and travel by thought power."

Their first problem occurs when the Venusians they have rescued decide to keep them captives on Venus. "It is in the interest and must be done!" said Soli." The earthlings were exhibited at various institutions of learning and kept as prisoners with the ultimate expectation of being sacrificed in an

active volcano. The Professor took copious notes and they were all interested in the culture since Venusian science was more advanced than Earth science. The prospects, however, disturbed them.

Gozona, the woman in blue who started the whole thing, came to their rescue. She led them through an underground passage towards the rocket ship. They had to kill transparent snakes, horned spiders and cross a stream filled with high voltage electric eels. This they did successfully, reached the rocket ship and escaped in spite of a minor explosion which knocked them senseless. They had a near-miss with a comet, were hit by a small meteor and ran through an edge of a storm of the fatal yellow snow. After four days they reached earth, set the negative gravity machines going, and landed safely less than a quarter of a mile from their home. It was good navigating.

In the last of this series of space exploration science fiction Jack Darrow and Mark Sampson have graduated from college and are now professors at the Universal Electrical and Chemical College, specializing in astronomy. Professor Henderson and Washington White have apparently retired from the exploring business. Even Jack and Mark have little to do with these adventures. It is true they invented a selective magnetic machine which was taken on the trip to Saturn. It could be used to repel as well as attract and saved the expedition by repelling a storm of meteors.

Lucky Wright and Phil Baker, students at the college, find that Phil's uncle has built a rocket ship for a trip to Saturn. They prevail on him to go along. The college president's young son Bobby and his pet goat also go along as stowaways.

A rival expedition leaves at the same time since rocket ships have become more common. Both ships reach Saturn, both crews are captured by the natives and both groups escape and reach earth safely. While they are on Saturn they are involved in numerous difficulties. Although they have disintegrator guns and "a generous amount of arms and ammunition" it doesn't always help. In the Cave of Perfumed Steam they found themselves shriveling up both outwardly and inwardly but escaped on the back of a cooperative Brontosaurus who carried them out of the cave. They met flying fish that uttered weird, song-like noises. The death-ray guns proved incapable of coping with the aggressive flying fish until a sea lizard, Tylosaurus Dyspelor, joined in and routed the attackers.

In their travels around Saturn they picked up radio messages in Latin using geometry as a code. Here, also, they found the natives advanced in science with combination dirigible-airplanes, human magnetizers and weird machines with burnished disks. In physical appearance Saturnians were similar to earth humans but grew up to eight feet tall and had purple cellophane skins which they shed from time to time. They were also belligerent and imprisoned the earth explorers who barged into the middle of a local war.

Since the language was Latin and our heroes had a classical as well as scientific education they could communicate with little difficulty. They find television by mist has been perfected on Saturn, to say nothing of vapor or thought clouds which were used for transportation. It is interesting that thought force appears on Mars, Venus and also on Saturn showing, possibly, inter-planetary communication. The explorers are supposed to be released from prison to fight "several armies from people on the ten satellites." However, the action gets complicated. King Bazom, their captor, is conquered by King Cramii and the prisoners change captors and prisons. King Cramii makes peace with the invaders and announces the prisoners

will be killed by magnetic projectiles in two days. The prisoners are concerned by this announcement so they take some spare lengths of pipe from their space ship, hook them to a geyser beneath the king's palace and, "We'll blow up King Cramii with his palace!" said Phil joyfully."

The geyser did just that and both groups escaped to their space ships. All were saved except the goat. "Bobby and his friends had tried in vain to get back his goat, but the animal seemed to have disappeared." Before returning to earth Lucky and Phil's ship visits an uninhabited part of Saturn and they obtained "many more flasks of rare vapors and gases," and "several new kinds of snakes, including some large 'vapor vipers,'" as well as healing sap from a giant mushroom. They have to leave the dinosaurs behind because of a space problem. In seven days they were home with no further adventures except "one narrow escape from their being involved in the nebulous tail of a comet." The trip was a great success, Bobby got a new goat which he named "Saturn" and that was the end of the Great Marvel Series.

These books formed the major and possibly the only Syndicate "space travel" series until Tom Swift Jr. came on the scene, many years later. The casual disregard for the problems which beset our modern astronauts is a credit to the inventors of the space ships and the interpid explorers. Fortunately their science was equal to any problems which could arise, though often just barely in time. The Great Marvel Series still reads well, many many years after the books were written.

The Stratemeyer influence in juvenile science and adventure stories can really be traced from "Jack, the Inventor" in 1891 to the present day. Although Victor Appleton II is no longer recording the inventions of Tom Swift Jr., his books are still on sale and still giving many boys their first introduction to the world of science. True, there was a gap of a few years between Tom Sr. and Jr. but boys were still reading Tom Senior during these years. (They still do.) This makes close to 85 years of science fiction influence on the young people of America. Science and invention, the Futuristic, and Space Travel are all included. With the fantastic sales of some of these series, particularly Tom Swift, no one can question the influence of these books on several generations. In popular juvenile science fiction it seems quite clear that the blood lines run from Ellis to Senarens to Stratemeyer with only a minor assist from Verne.

End of Part I

Footnotes

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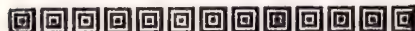
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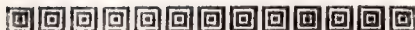
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THE FIRST TOM SLADE BOOK, OR, MOVIES TO PRINT

By J. R. Chenu

The common edition of the first volume of the Tom Slade series which is the one best known to boys book collectors is in the same format used throughout the series. A greenish cloth binding and photographs used as endpapers are well known identifying marks. The exterior of the cover shows the title to be **TOM SLADE BOY SCOUT** on both front cover and spine.

The title as shown on the flyleaf, however, is **TOM SLADE BOY SCOUT OF THE MOVING PICTURES**. The flyleaf also states "Adapted and Illustrated From The Photo Play 'The Adventures Of A Boy Scout'." It further indicates "Produced and Copyrighted by the Wedepict Motion Picture Corporation, Illustrations and Text used by special arrangement with the Boy Scouts of America, and approved and endorsed by them."

The book contains one illustration, used as frontispiece. This is a photo scene taken from the moving picture. The end papers are a photo showing "Police Commissioner Woods of New York City and Boy Scout Troop in front of the Regent Theatre, where the first performance of 'The Adventures of a Boy Scout' was given."

It is thus evident that the reverse of the usual order of things had taken place. Instead of a movie being made from a book, the book was made from a movie. It also seems to clarify just what the title, "The Adventures Of A Boy Scout" arises from. Among others I have sought a book by this title by Fitzhugh, without success. It would apparently not exist. The story this title represents is **TOM SLADE BOY SCOUT**.

The first edition of this title differs in several respects from the better known edition described above. It is also published by Grosset & Dunlap, but is in a slightly larger sized format which is bound in a lighter colored cloth which is more khaki in tone. It bears on its front cover and spine the title **TOM SLADE BOY SCOUT OF THE MOVING PICTURES**, with the lettering on the front of the book in a dark green and the spine is printed in black.

The same photo is used as endpapers, and the same photo is used as frontispiece. There are 12 additional illustrations in the body of the book. These are also photos taken from the movie.

There is one change on the flyleaf of this edition, Wedepict Motion Picture Corporation having been shown in this first edition as World Film Corporation.

This same larger sized format was also used for at least one more and probably two more titles in the series, thus apparently being the format in use from 1915 through 1917. Needless to say, this format is considerably harder to find than the later one.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 311 Paul Fisher, 281 Calle de Santo, Green Valley, Arizona 85614 (New add.)
- 353 Dr. Elizabeth A. Lawrence, P. O. Box 35, Adamsville, R. I. 02801 (New member)
- 359 Thomas Stotler, Penobscot, Maine 04476 (New member)
- 289 Ruth V. McKee, 1940 Inglehart, Apt. 10, St. Paul, Minn 55104 (New add.)
- 360 Mrs. Richard W. Clark, 235 Broadway, Apt. 3, South Portland, Maine 04106 (New member)
- 361 Gene Fiege, 5007 217th St., S.W., Mountlake Terrace, Washington 98043 (New member)
- 191 Everard P. Digges LaTouche, 163 Park St., Montclair, N. J. 07042

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

Q. Has anyone seen a copy of the "Jack Straw Series" or "Ben Lightbody Series"? George Holmes.

A. Harry K. Hudson replies: The Jack Straw Series by Irving Crump. Two titles, Jack Straw in Mexico and Jack Straw, Lighthouse Builder, are listed in the 1917 Cumulative Book Index (CBI). I would say that this is fairly conclusive proof that the books were published. Apparently they had limited printing and, hence, are scarce. I do not know of anyone who has a copy. The only source of information I know of in respect to the Ben Lightbody Series, is ads in the rear of some Altamus books, early ones, incidently. The Ben Lightbody listing is consistently absent in later issues. So, I just don't know about this series. There are many cases of various publishers noting a 'next volume' by title near the end of a book, which was never published. Jerry Todd, Detective being a familiar example. But books listed in publishers' catalogs and rear-of-book ads invariably were real, published books. If, indeed, the Ben Lightbody books were never issued, it would constitute the only example of a 'phantom' listing of which I know. Incidentally, the author given for the Lightbody books is Walter Benham. There are a few cases of single phantom titles. The list in the front of "Tom Swift and His Air Glider" shows 'Tom Swift in Giant Land.' When actually issued, of course, the title was 'Tom Swift in Captivity.' So George, I would be most interested in hearing if anybody has a Ben Lightbody book.

Bob Chenu comments: I've not only never seen either a Jack Straw or Ben Lightbody Series, but I've searched in various reference sources without success for the Lightbody Series, and Prof. David Mitchell at SUNY, Albany's Library School has also had no success in trying to establish that the Lightbody books were ever published. It is my own opinion that the Lightbody Series was not published. I've never made the same sort of check for Jack Straw, so all I can say about that one is that I haven't got one nor do I know anyone who has one, nor have I ever seen one. I have also sought unsuccessfully to establish that the second volume of the White Fibbon Boys Series was published. Normally a "series" was launched by a publisher by putting out from 2 to 5 titles all at once, and one would expect it to exist. I've never seen a copy and don't know of anyone having a copy, and like Lightbody, can find no evidence of publication. Has anyone seen a copy?

David Mitchell adds a little more information: I'm sure others have written to correct George Holmes on his attribution of the "Ben Lightbody Series" to Irving Crump. But this mention of one Irving reminds of an interesting connection with another Irving. Although Altamus consistently advertised the "Ben Lightbody Series" by Walter Benham (these ads appear not only in the backs of books but also in Altamus' catalog in the 1913 PTLA), the Altamus catalog in PTLA for 1914 carries this entry, "BEN LIGHTBODY SERIES By H. Irving Hancock"!!! This may be a mistake, or Altamus may have planned at one point to make hay out of Hancock on this projected series. (The only pseudonym Hancock is supposed to have used was the Durham for the Submarine Boy Series. See Leithead DNR 36:87). In any case, the series seems to be a ghost series. Neither of the advertised titles can be found in the Catalog of Copyright Entries.

Q. Does anyone have a copy of Josie O'Gorman (1923 Reilly & Lee) by Edith Van Dyne (Emma Speed Sampson). In one source (Pub. Weekly 7-7-23)

the title is listed as Josie O'Gorman, The Girl Detective. I would like to verify this.—David Mitchell.

Q. How many Merriwells were published in the cloth bound Maroon edition?—C. L. Messecar.

Q. The Merriam Co. supposedly published 4 Stratemever titles, Reuben Stone's Discovery, Richard Dare's Venture, Last Cruise of the Spitfire and Oliver Bright's Search. I have located the first 3 titles but have yet to verify that Oliver Bright's Search was actually published. Does anyone have a copy?

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

DIME NOVELS LIVE AGAIN, by John A. Dinan. In the ANTIQUES JOURNAL for July 1975, \$1.00 per copy, Box 1046, Dubuque, Iowa 52001. A very knowledgeable article on the status of dime novel collecting illustrated with 10 cover reproductions from my collection. Mr. Dinan does me honor by calling me "King of the Dime Novels."

STRIVE AND SUCCEED (HORATIO ALGER & HIS TIMES), by Herb L. Risteen. In Good Old Days Revisited, Fall 1975 issue. 75c. Tower Press, Inc., Box 428, Seabrook, New Hampshire 03874. This is a reprinting of Mr. Risteen's article which appeared in an early issue of GOOD OLD DAYS.

TRUE WEST, June 1975 in their cover illustration used Wide Awake Library No. 1196 to illustrate an article titled "Battle of the Little Big Horn." However the artist took liberties with the Wide Awake title changing it to "Custer's Last Stand" instead of "Custer's Last Shot." This no doubt will have unknowledgeable collectors looking for a non-existent title.

ALGER FANS GATHER IN GENESEO, by Bob Bickel. THE TIME-UNION, Rochester, N. Y., May 9, 1975. Article describing the doings at the Horatio Alger Society Convention.

TOP ALGERITE FIRST TO ARRIVE, by Bob Bickel. Democrat and Chronicle, Rochester, New York, May 9, 1975. Interview with Harold Gardner

HORATIO ALGER COMES TO GENESEO. Geneseo Compass, May 9, 1975. Newspaper account of the Horatio Alger Convention.

NICK CARTER SOLVES HIS 100th, by Melvin Maddocks. Christian Science Monitor, May 8, 1975. Very good article on the occasion of the issuance of AWARD BOOK'S 100th new Nick Carter story. The 100th issue contains an early Nick Carter short story from the pages of New York Weekly selected by Randy Cox. The same article was reprinted in the Minneapolis Tribune May 12, 1975 under the heading "Nick Carter's Keeper at St. Olaf."

NICK CARTER (REMEMBER HIM?) IS THRIVING AT ST. OLAF, by Kathryn Boardman. St. Paul Pioneer Press, April 30, 1975. A review of Nick Carter's career, and Randy Cox's efforts to publicize the great detective.

DETECTIVE NOVELS MAKING STRONG COMEBACK, by Phyllis Patelle, Hearst Headline Service, Seattle Post-Intelligence, April 30, 1975. Another review of Nick Carter's career and Randy Cox's connection with the upsurge of detective novels.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OLIVER OPTIC? by Gene Gleason. Article appearing in the Wilson Library Bulletin for May 1975. A very good article about the "quarrel" between Oliver Optic and Louisa May Alcott. (Copy of article sent in by Jack Bales.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Ed:

My favorite pards who rode with Buffalo Bill in the Buffalo Bill Stories were California Joe, Wild Bill, Texas Jack, Captain Jack, White Beaver, Evil Spirit of the Plains and Pawnee Bill. Also favorites were his pards of purely fiction, Alkali Pete, Wolfer Joe, Nick Wharton, Nick Nomad, Catamount Tom, Silas Snodgrass, Overland Dock and Little Cayuse. There's few pleasures I have in my old age nearing 87, but Buffalo Bill Stories is one of them.

—Buckskin Bill Randolph

Dear Eddie,

I have been reading odd lot items, including some issues of Robin Hood. Great stories. The stories are extremely well written, lots of action and lots of violence, which always seemed to me to be a necessary part of any medieval type story, considering the nature of the times. Very interesting material. I also noticed the writer didn't waste much time in airing his prejudices and political views in print with a lot of sly digs at various establishment practices. Certainly a lot more political than most of the American weeklies of the period.

Also read a few issues of Detective Library with the James Boys stories. The stories do NOT glorify the outlaws at all. In fact the stories billed to Stevens as writer usually show the outlaw band to be easy going but blood thirsty and completely amoral in every respect. Murder and robbery is second nature to every member of the band who would think no more of killing someone than taking a drink of whiskey (which they also do in great quantities). However detective Carl Greene is a good opponent and in the stories I've read so far, altho the James gang usually manages to get away with a few smaller robberies, they are invariably foiled in their attempts to complete or get away with the Big Job, be it robbery or murder.

In the stories by Doughty the gang is pictured differently. One thing I noticed in the stories is that there seems to be an enormous amount of padding to bring the story out to full length. Lots of one and two line or one and two word paragraphs to stretch the page count out. However his treatment of the gang is very different. For one thing altho they are equally as vicious in action as the Stevens stories, they seem to have redeeming qualities and some slight sense of moral responsibility. Also and this is the major point I've found so far, the gang is pictured as being very unstable. Frank and Jesse are continuously quarreling and other members of the gang, especially the Youngers, are pictured as being rebellious and eager to question Jesse's leadership. In fact a lot of their problems are due to argument and dissention among the gang members. Also the gang is shown to be remarkably callous to the welfare of wounded or fallen or captured members. Jesse and the others are ready to abandon the wounded and captured without a second thought, whereas in the Stevens stories loyalty and comaradory among the gang members is played up as one of their strong points.

All the stories are very well written. Lots of action and not much in the way of characterization, but very interesting indeed. Somebody ought to do an article comparing the various attitudes taken toward the James gang in their various dime and nickle novel appearances.

I also read a couple of copies of the Westbrook paperback novel books on the James gang. What a difference! The writer apparently had little or no information about the outlaws of any kind, and simply wrote stories which he thought were great stuff about the members of the band without regard for any factual background of any sort. The story I'm laughing my way thru

now is titled Jesse James, Gentleman, is set in San Francisco, and from the numerous errors made already regarding electric light bulbs, house to house telephone conversations and the like, the writer has inadvertently placed the outlaw hero in the time frame about the turn of the century. The story is one of those ridiculous super-involved English style detective stories with a lot of nonsensical plots within plots that don't have any logical support, complex actions and counter actions that don't mean anything, and features Jesse James blending in with elite society and rebuking snobbery with the accepted social etiquette of the day. It's pretty poor plotting all the way thru. I'm about midway thru now, certainly hope things get better. I can't understand how this series has become so famous with collectors, it has almost nothing going for it except the name of Jesse James.—Robert Jennings.

Dear Ed:

Last night (May 5) on the ABC-TV program at 6:30 p.m. I watched the Smith-Reasoner Report. What made my two cylinder brain perk up was that they showed a demonstration of a "TASER" beam.

The gadget contains two small darts, has a light (something similar to the type mounted on bicycles) and a couple of batteries. Purpose of this gadget is that when it is fired at a culprit it immediately stuns him/her. Seen a demonstration with a volunteer and the guy sure hit the deck pronto. It cannot kill. I image you know that the purpose of the gadget would be vg in mob control, etc. I don't know the distance that the darts can be fired and no doubt improvements will be made in the near future.

You are probably thinking "so what?" The inventor (I think his name was Coulter) stated that many years ago he read "Tom Swift & His Electric Rifle," he got the idea from the tome.

A picture was shown of a vg copy of "Electric Rifle" with a bright clean d/j. Ain't that sumpin'??

Figured I would dash off this info to ya before I forget.

—George Holmes, Vine Street, Milford, N. H. 03055

NEWS NOTES

Eari Wilson, in his syndicated column, says that Burt Lancaster will play Ned Buntline. He doesn't say whether it's a TV series or a movie. We will be looking forward to his appearance. (Sent in by Owen Cobb)

Louis Bodnar, Jr. Chesapeake, Virginia writes that many books by Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper are in print in Hungary. A friend in Hungary mentions the fact that dime novel reprints were published in Hungary between World War I and World War II. I have a number of foreign edition Buffalo Bill and Nick Carter stories (French, German, Spanish and Italian) but have yet to see a Hungarian reprint. Both Buffalo Bill and Nick Carter had respectable runs in many languages and it would be a feather in the cap of a serious researcher to uncover all such publications. Mr. Bodnar is attempting through friends in Hungary to discover the history of their reprintings in that country.

John T. Dizer was guest speaker at the Central New York Library Association's Spring Banquet on May 29, 1975. His topic was "TOM SWIFT AND HIS FRIENDS." Dr. Dizer will be featured in the Roundup with an excellent article on Edward Stratemeyer next month.

DIME NOVEL COLLECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

FRANK MERRIWELL'S POWER. Zebra Books, Kensington Publishing Corp., 388 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10017. A reprint of the Merriwell Series book of the same title. Published February 1975. (Infor sent in by Frank Acker and Howard Funk). I wonder if the publishers are having a good sales as this is the second Merriwell book published. The first was Frank Merriwell's Search which was published in January 1975. Will appreciate members checking the paperback book shelves in their local stores. I have been unable to locate either one locally.

FOR SALE

CHEEVER, HARRIET A.

Josie Bean: Flat Street. Dana Estes. Good ----- \$2.00

CHELEY, F. H.

Boy Scout Trail Blazers, The. Barse. Good ----- 2.00

Boy Scout Trail Blazers, The. Barse & Hopkins. VG ----- 2.50

CHIPMAN, WILLIAM P.

Budd Boyd's Triumph. Burt, Early ed. Good ----- 2.00

CLARK, NATALIE R.

Balek Redding. Little Brown, 1903. Good ----- 2.00

CLIFTON, OLIVER LEE

Camp Fire Boys. G&D. Large Ed. contains 4 Camp Fire Boys stories.

VG ----- 4.00

Camp Fire Boys in Muskrat Swamp. Barse & Hopkins. Good ----- 2.00

COBB, FRANK, Capt.

Battling the Clouds. Saalfeld. VG d/j, large ed. ----- 2.50

Battling the Clouds. Saalfeld. VG d/j, small ed. ----- 2.00

Battling the Clouds. Saalfeld. Ex. small ed. ----- 1.50

Dangerous Deeds. Saalfeld. VG. d/j. Large ed. ----- 2.50

Dangerous Deeds. Saalfeld. VG, large ed. ----- 2.00

Dangerous Deeds. Saalfeld. Good, small ed. ----- 1.50

COFFIN, CHARLES CARLETON

Boys of '61, The. Page. Good ----- 3.00

Dan of Millbrook. Estes & Lauriat 1894 Cracked at spine ----- 3.00

Following the Flag. Hurst. Good ----- 2.00

Winning His Way. Hurst. VG d/j ----- 2.50

COLLINGWOOD, HARRY

Congo Rovers. G&D on spine. Scribners on title page. VG ----- 2.50

Congo Rovers. Scribners 1894. Good ----- 3.00

COLLINS, A. FREDERICK

Jack Heaton, Oil Prospector. Stokes. VG ----- 3.00

COLT, MARTIN

Secret of Baldhead Mountain, The. Guild. VG, d/j ----- 2.00

COLTON, MATTHEW

Frank Armstrong Captain of the Nine. Burt. Good ----- 2.00

Frank Armstrong, Drop Kicker. Hurst, large ed. Good ----- 2.50

Frank Armstrong's Vacation. Burt. Good ----- 2.00

CONVERSE, FRANK H.

Island Treasure, The. Burt. Early ed. VG ----- 3.00

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